THE RAGTIME SOCIETY

DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF CLASSIC RAGTIME

P.O. BOX 8 KING, ONT., CANADA

Vol. 1, No. 4. June, 1962.

We must apologise for the lateness of this Bulletin, but circumstances have delayed it for about ten days, thus the date of June and not May on No. 4.

Firstly, in this issue we want to deal with the Ragtime Concert held in Toronto on May 4th. at Massey Hall. Unfortunately, some of you were confused with the ever-changing dates of this concert. The organizers of this event were well-meaning but inexperienced. They did a fine job - but not enough. As a result of their promotion - or lack of it - the concert was held on one night only, May 4th. However, this was a fine concert and all the 2500 odd seats were sold. The organizers plan, we understand, another concert in the fall which should run three days.

We were fortunate in obtaining sufficient extra programmes to send you one with this Bulletin. We think this is a truly magnificent programme. Mr. John German of the Civitan Club was able to arrange the printing of this programme as a gift from the Provincial Paper Co. We congratulate Provincial on a splendid job. We also think they were very generous to assist the concert, and the Civitan Club, in their hospital fund raising efforts in donating this programme. There is only one technical error - The "Ragtime Dance" was written by Kerry Mills - not Joplin.

We will not describe what was played in detail, as it is well covered in the programme. Just a few comments:

- The orchestra, in our opinion, was excellent
- as always, Don Vincent did great arrangements
- the East York Chorus was good but there were a few too many voices - sixty-five.
- Bob's experiments with violin, viola, cello, and piano (Euphonic Sounds) were rewarding, although the group could have used more practice together.
- The audience was very enthusiastic.

I went with Mrs. Joseph Lamb and her sons, Joseph, Jr. and Robert, and her grandson William, who all came up from New York. It is nice to see Mrs. Lamb and the memory of her husband honoured by this affair, and we hope for more such concerts in the future.

We missed the keen Erie, Pa. Ragtime fans, led by Dr. Tom Owen and his wife Betty Jane. They were unable to attend as they were having

their own concert on the same night in Erie. Both Tom and Betty Jane played to about sixty-five people at the annual alumni meeting of the Kappa Kappa Gamma Sorority in Erie. Tom and Betty Jane play very well. We will talk about their Erie concert in the next issue. Tom has a tape of it en route to us now. If any of you have been or intend to be part of local concerts, let us know. We are sure you would all like to know about local concerts across the country. It is always pleasant to hear about people spreading the good word about Ragtime. As we have said before, we would be thrilled with any items that any subscriber to the Bulletin would like to send us.

RECORDS

Two interesting items this issue: one about a new record; the other about one to be released very soon. The new record is Solo Art BJ-18001 - "Giant Stride" by Don Lambert. This is the first of the new Solo Art label (an old label now reborn) produced by Rudi Blesh and Harriet Janis. Don's playing could never be called Classic Ragtime, but it is excellent Stride piano of the Fats Waller, James P. Johnson school. The record is technically excellent and Lambert's playing is a thrill. I once journeyed to Wallace's Bar in Orange, N.J., lugging my tape recorder to catch Don. I wish my tapes had the clarity of this record. I must report sadly that on May 8th. at Wallace's, Don died suddenly while playing. Recognition of his fine playing came just weeks before his death. The address for those who want this record is, Solo Art Records, 38 East 4th. Street, New York 3, N.Y.

The second record should be out in a few weeks, and sounds like a must for everyone. It is the work of Bob Darch, who assembled three living Ragtime greats - Eubie Blake, Charles Thompson, and Joe Jordan - on a record with himself. The title will be, "The Golden Reunion In Ragtime", on the Stereo Oddities label. We will tell you more about exciting records next Bulletin.

SHEET MUSIC

We want an expression of opinion from you on sheet music, particularly the music we are attempting to provide published by the Society. As we have stated previously, we need a certain number of orders to economically print a piece of music. To be precise, about 35 orders. We received this many for "Original Rags", but not yet for "Elite Syncopations". If you want the latter number, let us know at once or we will have to return the money to the people who have already ordered. We would like an expression of opinion on the whole music idea. If you remember, the main criterion for the formation of the Society were:

1. to disseminate interesting news and information about people, events, and history on Ragtime to the subscribers.

2. To try to generate more interest among more people regarding Classic Ragtime.

In the pursuance of No. 2, we have offered, as you know, to acquire commercial music, rolls, books, etcetera, for those who either can't or don't find it easy to get such items themselves. We have also intended to produce more or less regularly, sheet music that is no longer available. Needless to say, this is all a labour of love. This all causes Jim Kinnear, Idamay MacInnes, and myself, a lot of

work, letter writing, etc. We are trying to break even on all these activities. This is not to say that we aren't happy to do it, but it is a lot of work to acquire commercial items. It is even more to publish our own. We are happy to do both if that is what you want. What we want to know is: a) are there enough people interested in Society-published music as an idea? b) Are there enough people but we are just offering the wrong music? To repeat, please drop us a card at once on our sheet music question.

News for our Western Canadian subscribers. There is a new Club 76 opening at 1133 Portage Avenue, in Winnipeg. It is owned by the same management as the Club 76 in Toronto. Bob Darch opened it (May 23rd. - June 1st) then returned to Club 76 in Toronto for the month of June. We don't know who will be playing it in the future.

Next issue we hope to give you more information about Tom and Betty Jane Owen's concert; review the record the "Golden Reunion in Ragtime", and tell you about the Dawson City Festival starting in July in Dawson City, Yukon. Bob Darch will be playing there on the moored stern wheeler - The Keno.

John A. Fisher,
Chairman.